



Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's Natural Resource Apprenticeship Program

The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore contains exceptional biological diversity. The park is comprised of over 15,000 acres of dunes, oak savannas, swamps, bogs, marshes, prairies, rivers, and forests. This setting provides an excellent opportunity for college students to gain field experience to complement their academic work.

What is this new program?

A program that provides experience and training to college students interested in careers such as Biologist, Botanist, Wildlife Biologist, Wild-land fire fighting professional, and Researcher. The students work as volunteers in the park, while learning the skills common to entry level positions for recent college graduates pursuing one of these or related natural resource careers.

How does it work?

Students enrolled in the program gain hands on experience doing a variety of land management activities, such as invasive plant control, native plant propagation, wildlife surveys, and wetland restorations. In addition, the students receive training in resource management activities (for example use of chainsaws, brush-cutters, herbicides, etc.) and the class work required for basic wild-land fire fighting. The students may also prepare a summary report on field data they have collected. Upon successful completion of eight weeks of hands on work experience and two weeks of training, the students in the program receive a certificate of completion from the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

What are the Requirements for the Program?

You must be accepted or enrolled at a college with plans to pursue a degree in the biological sciences or a closely related field. This is a field skills training program that involves regular periods of considerable and strenuous physical exertion such as carrying or lifting heavy objects or walking long distances. The work is performed in an office, laboratory, and in the field. Fieldwork may include exposure to extreme weather conditions, uneven terrain, pesticides, poisonous plants, biting insects, and wild animals.

What are the benefits?

Jobs in the biological science fields are very competitive. Field experience and skills are invaluable for reaching your career goals. In addition, gaining experience now helps students focus their academic work in the future. Students will also learn about the many different careers available in the National Park Service. Student may also receive college credit for completing the Apprenticeship Program. For information on the specific credit requirements, you should contact your academic advisor. Please note, at this time, we cannot provide housing. Call the number below for more information concerning local housing opportunities.

How to apply?

In 2005, the National Lakeshore anticipates accepting up to ten students into the Natural Resource Apprenticeship Program. If you are interested in participating in the program send a short resume describing your work and educational experience, a document showing you are accepted or enrolled at a college, and contact information for three references to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, 1100 Mineral Springs Rd., Porter, Indiana, 46304-1299 Attn: Natural Resource Apprenticeship Program **by April 15, 2005.**

When?

The students will start on June 6 and complete the program on August 12. The schedule will be 7:30am-4:00pm Monday through Friday and students will have July 4 and two other non-training days off to use during session.

Need More Information? Contact Scott Hicks at 219-926-7561 Ext. 335 or Scott_Hicks@nps.gov